

03/09/2007

Dear Friend:

The dark details surfacing about the tragic situation at Walter Reed Army Medical Center's outpatient care facilities are appalling. The tales of inadequate care and the demoralizing images of the facilities in which our injured are housed, both highlight the tragic shortcomings in the way we care for our wounded. Our government is failing our soldiers - past and present - because of outsourcing and a total lack of oversight in the previous Congress.

Unfortunately, problems with the Department of Defense's handling of our active duty soldiers' healthcare system is reminiscent of problems we've seen in the VA. During my years on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, we extensively examined many of the inadequacies that exist in the system. What we found was the VA's rejection of legitimate claims, their failure to recognize the severity of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and the breakdown of ability to protect our soldiers -- those who so honorably protect us. How can we ask the biggest sacrifice from them and their families without holding up our end of the bargain? How can we escalate the war in Iraq knowing full well we are not taking care of those returning today with grave injuries?

Congress must act to remedy this situation. That is why yesterday I cosponsored H.R. 1268, the Dignity for Wounded Warriors Act of 2007. This bill would "ensure dignity in care for all members of the Armed Forces recovering from injuries." We in Congress have a moral obligation to pass this bill and put it on the President's desk.

To learn more about the Dignity for Wounded Warriors Act, please visit <http://www.tomudall.house.gov/display2.cfm?id=12625&type=Services>.

Thank you for reading my update, and if you have questions or comments on this or any other federal issue, please feel free to contact me.

For more information on this or any federal issue, please visit my website at [www.tomudall.house.gov](http://www.tomudall.house.gov).

Very Truly Yours,

*Tom Udall*  
Member of Congress